

Is the moral of this *Hazard* that you should not believe your own eyes? Not at all! But if your eyes see unusual things – and exceptionally even what you see is the absence of things - there is probably some interesting underlying cause. Who knows ... while I am writing this, *Acraea kraka kibi* might just be having a field day on the Atewa Range!— TORBEN B. LARSEN, UNDP Vietnam, c/o Palais des Nations, 1211 Geneva 10, Switzerland (E-mail: torbenlarsen@netnam.vn).

### History of Devon Lepidoptera recording

There were several lists of Lepidoptera local to various towns in Devon written in the early 1800s, the most notable of these being *A List of some Insects found in Dartmoor, and its Neighbourhood* by R. & C. Tucker, which is associated with *Dartmoor, Descriptive Poems* by N. T. Carrington (1826). This listing is embedded into the Preface, which is 105 pages long. Pages *lxxxiv* to *xciii* list the Lepidoptera and pages *xciv* to *cv* list the Coleoptera; a list of plants is to be found at the end of this edition. A further list produced by W. Turton & J. C. Kingston (1828 or 1830), *Lepidoptera of Teignmouth, Dawlish and Torquay*, is to be found in N. T. Carrington et. al. *A Torquay Guide, Part 2*. As this has no pagination, I assume this is embedded in the Preface of this book, similar to the 1826 book on Dartmoor. I was unable to find this, but found W. Turton & J. C. Kingston (1828 or 1830), *The Natural History of the District of Teignmouth, Dawlish and Torquay, of the Different Species of Animals, Vegetables and Minerals*, which has a section on *Insects including Lepidoptera*; this also has no pagination.

J. C. Dale published (1831), in *Magazine of Natural History* **4**: 265-267, *Insects captured by J.C. Dale in Hampshire, Dorsetshire, Devonshire, Cornwall and Somerset* and Rev. E. Horton (1857) published a list for Martinhoe, near Lynton (*Captures in Devonshire*) which is to be found in the *Entomologist's Weekly Intelligencer* **2**: 149. *A List of Insects taken at Barnstaple* by G. F. Mathew (1858), is in the same publication, **5**: 68-70; 98-100 and 179-181.

J. J. Reading produced his list *Catalogue of Lepidoptera of Devon and Cornwall*, in Plymouth Inst. Trans. pages 41 to 64, part I, (1861-1862); pages 89 to 122, part II (1862-1863) and pages 51 to 155, part III (1864-1865). This featured many species of Lepidoptera, butterflies and moths and referred to the early collectors of that time; strangely enough, it did not list the geometrid moths.

*A Natural History of Teignmouth* written by W. R. H. Jordan (1874. *Rep. Trans. Devon Assoc. Advmt. Sci.* **6**: 707 to 715, and G.C. Bignell published *The Geometrida of Plymouth and its vicinity*, published in the Plymouth Inst. Trans. (1877 to 1878) pages 424 to 432.

Edward Parfitt (1820-1893) who contributed many papers for *Rep. Trans. Devon Assoc. Advmt. Sci.*, produced *Fauna of Devon*, which was published in a few volumes of that publication and included a Lepidoptera section in volume 10 (1878), pages 411 to 588. This includes references from the collectors of his day and listed

the butterflies, microlepidoptera and macrolepidoptera known in Devon. G. C. Bignell (1879-1880) produced a *Catalogue of Lepidoptera of the Plymouth District*; this is a manuscript copy (Parfitt, 1878) and was not, as I stated in *Moths of Devon* (2001), published in Plymouth Inst. Trans. This copy has not been found.

G. C. Bignell published *The Pyralidina of Plymouth and its vicinity* (1879), in the Plymouth Inst. Trans. pages 301 to 304, and E. F. Studd published several sections of a list for Oxtou, Exeter *Entomologist*. (1893 – 1900), **26**: 15 & 128; **27**: 55 - 57; **28**: 133-134; **29**: 131-134; **30**: 145-146; **31**: 71; **32**: 95 and **33**: 130. As part of these articles, he describes his illuminated moth traps.

One of our most famous collectors, C. G. Barrett (1836-1904), commenced his serious study of Lepidoptera when he was around 20 years old and we find references to his work in the newly formed *Entomologist's Weekly Intelligencer* (1856) and the *Zoologist*. His chief work *The Lepidoptera of the British Islands* was commenced in 1892, and the ninth volume produced in 1905; he was also responsible for the Lepidoptera section in the *Victoria County History: Devon* (1906), pages 208 to 230, which lists all the known species of Lepidoptera in Devon.

Dr. G. B. Longstaff published his *Lepidoptera Observed in the Parish of Morteheo, North Devon* (second edition, (in 1903), 29 pages and third edition (in 1907), 68 pages; the first edition was probably produced in the late 1890s. H. Lupton produced an account of the Flora and Fauna of the Torquay District in the Torquay Natural History Society (TNHS), with the Lepidoptera section on pages 127 to 134; he was President of the TNHS from 1914 to 1916. J. Walker and H. Lupton produced *Notes on Local Lepidoptera* (1915), a four page document published separately. J. Walker published *Notes on the Local Lepidoptera* around the same time (no date given, but probably around 1930) in the TNHS pages 265 to 275. It was suggested by Mr. Priestly (an active entomologist around 1900) that they should begin a collection of Devon butterflies and moths for the Museum (Torquay); J. Walker reviewed the macrolepidoptera of the Torquay District (1930) and booklets on Torquay Lepidoptera were produced by H. Lupton and J. Walker and sent to other museums and entomological Societies, probably referring to the two documents listed above.

F. R. Elliston-Wright produced his *Braunton. A few Nature Notes* (1926). This included descriptive notes up to page 69 then lists of plants, Lepidoptera (pages 79 to 90) and a list of birds up to page 106. A map of the Braunton area is on the inside back cover. The whole of this book is interleaved with blank pages, presumably to make notes. A further edition was produced in 1932 and is the one that most people have referred to. This has descriptive notes up to page 110 and lists of plants, Lepidoptera (pages 131 to 141) and birds up to page 156, with a map of the Braunton area on the first of several blank pages at the back of the book; the species lists were presumably based mainly on his own observations.

Dr. R. V. Solly produced *The Butterflies and Moths of the Neighbourhood of Exeter* (1932), which included Stoke Woods, Haldon, Dawlish Warren, Stover, Woodbury and Ladram Bay. This was published in The Proceedings of the College Field Club & Natural History Society, Exeter. IFF, 1946, edited by M. G. Palmer,

had a Lepidoptera section on pages 67 to 112 and includes references from the Entomologists of the area, but not from E. Parfitt's work (1878). This was compiled from a card index made by R. J. Burton, President of the South London Natural History Society (1943 to 1944), when he was resident in Ilfracombe. The book encompassed a circular area of roughly a ten mile radius centred upon Ilfracombe, included Lundy Island, and listed many of the Braunton records of Elliston Wright.

J. Heath, whilst stationed at Plymouth during the Second World War, compiled a list of moths and butterflies of Devon (1944 to 1948). There is one copy of a hand written listing entitled *The Lepidoptera of the County of Devon* (1946). From this there were produced two typed copies of the main list which mainly contained records from previous publications. The list included butterflies, macro and micro Lepidoptera and comprised 158 pages including an index. Subsidiary lists include Part 1 - Rhopalocera which has 10 pages, including an index and a *Provisional List of the Lepidoptera of Devon* by J. Heath and F. W. Jeffery and includes all the species in the main list within its 26 pages. The butterfly section was compiled by J. Heath and F. W. Jeffery. Butterfly Conservation, Devon Branch, have an annotated copy of this list which gives fairly extensive localities and information about the scarce migrants.

Engineer, Captain S. T. Stidston, who lived at Ashburton, was the first Secretary and Treasurer of the newly formed Entomological Section of the Devonshire Association which had its Inaugural Meeting on Saturday, 14 August 1948; the idea of putting together an Insect Fauna of Devonshire along the lines of the *Flora of Devon* (1939) was proposed in October of the same year. S. T. Stidston wrote *A List of the Lepidoptera of Devon, Part 1 and Introduction*, which was published in *Rep. Trans. Devon Assoc. Advmt. Sci.* (1952). This work acknowledged assistance from "Mr. Frank Lees, of Uplyme and Maidencombe and Dr. H. Henstock, formerly of Exmouth and Woodbury, for their long, detailed lists of species taken in their respective areas. Also to Mr. John Heath for the use of his unpublished list,". A listing of all of the recorders for this work can be found under the References and Sources section. The publication covered all the butterflies and macrolepidoptera seen in the county up to 1952 with references to the old works and entomologists. A list of Additions and Corrections for this was published in *Rep. Trans. Devon Assoc. Advmt. Sci.* (6th edition of the Entomology Section, 1953).

From the time the Entomology Section of the Devon Association for the Advancement of Science (DA) had been formed (1948) and reports of the more interesting species of Lepidoptera seen the previous year were published most years in the Report of the Transactions. McCormick, R. F., (2001) gives a listing of the recorders on pages 293-295, and these were copied from the DA record books which were kept up-to-date by the incumbent recorders.

E. C. Pelham-Clinton, a well known entomologist of his time, moved to Axminster in July 1981 and continued recording everything he saw in the insect world, along with other things in nature. He was responsible for putting the records of the microlepidoptera from two thirds of the county onto record cards and

producing numerous macrolepidoptera records that were put into the DA record books, which are retained by the Recorders in separate books. Unfortunately, he had only spent seven years in Devon when he died in December 1988. He bequeathed his diaries, with his field notes and written records, to the National Museums of Scotland (Edinburgh).

Bristow, C. R., Mitchell, S. H., and Bolton, D. E. published *Devon Butterflies* in 1993. This book contains 151 pages and has dot maps and descriptive text of all the species of butterfly recorded in Devon along with colour pictures of 44 species, a couple of colour pictures of localities, an index and descriptive text. Local lists were coming of age.

I wrote the *Larger Lepidoptera of Dawlish Warren*, which was published in several supplements in volumes **107** and **108** of *Ent. Record.* (1995 and 1996). This contained records I had made personally, species for which there were unconfirmed records that might be correct and a section with records that were highly improbable; the observations in these last two sections were taken from material submitted by the Visitor Centre at Dawlish Warren.

I also produced, in 1997, for the Devon Moth Group, *The Definitive Listing of Species Observed In Devon: Macrolepidoptera, Pyralidae and Plumes*; this had 37 pages and listed all the species of the groups in question with very brief indications of distribution within the county, I was ably assisted with this work and the next by Bob Heckford.

I then wrote *Moths of Devon* (McCormick, 2001), which included all of the records that had been made so far, with accounts of the previous publications authors' comments, along with sections on Conservation, History of recording, Geology and Migration, along with other topics. This work had 328 pages which included English and Latin indexes, 24 pictures of localities and 24 pictures of moths. No dot maps were included for the species, but one map showed dots of all the sites that had been visited thus far along with a comprehensive gazetteer.

Devon Moth Group was formed in 1996 and the first *Annual Report* (Newsletter 1997), listed all the species that had been seen the previous year. An *Annual Report* has been produced each year with the previous year's sightings of all species being shown with brief details of the more important examples. The 9th edition of this was published in January 2005.

Records for Devon, since 1994 when I started recording in the county seriously, have been stored on a database held on my own computer at my home. Input of records has been around 10,000 to 14,000 a year. I have records of my own that go back to 1960-1990, when I visited the county for species I needed. Lists were always made wherever I went and these were already on the database when I came to live in the county in 1993.— ROY MCCORMICK, 36 Paradise Road, Teignmouth, Devon, TQ14 8NR.